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Examiner: Kevin. L. Lee
Group Art Unit: 3753

Remarks/Arguments

Claims 1-36 are currently pending in the application. Claims 20-36 have been canceled without prejudice by this response. New claims 37-52 have been added.

Reconsideration and reexamination of the application is respectfully requested.

REJECTION UNDER 35 USC 103(A)

Claims 1-16 and 20-33 stand rejected as being obvious in view of Berg (U.S. Patent No. 4,550,928) in combination with Chimera (U.S. Patent No. 5,348,043), and vice-versa. The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claims 20-36 have been canceled without prejudice. As such, the rejection of these claims is now moot. The rejection will be addressed with respect to claims 1-16.

It is respectfully submitted that the teaching of the combination of Chimera and Berg as made in the Office Action is overreaching and not supported by the references. When the teaching of the combination of Chimera and Berg is correctly construed, the combination does not reach claims 1-16.

Chimera teaches a universal valve that can be used as a gladhand in one of its configurations. Chimera comprises a body defining an internal passageway having an inlet and an outlet. The inlet 5 is defined by a threaded fitting 13. The outlet 7 is defined by a gladhand face. The threaded fitting 13 is designed to threadably receive the main air supply for a tractor (see Col. 4, lines 44-46).

Berg discloses a swivel coupling for connecting a standard gladhand 44 to a conventional air supply. The standard gladhand comprises a body defining an internal air passage having a threaded inlet and an outlet defined by the gladhand face. The threaded inlet threadably couples to the gladhand to the threaded stem 45 of the swivel coupling.

The combination of Chimera and Berg, and vice versa, would result in the gladhand of Chimera replacing the gladhand of Berg. That is, the Chimera gladhand with its internal valve would be threaded onto the threaded stem 45 of Berg.

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This combination of Chimera and Berg yields a structure markedly different than the structure called for in claim 1. Claim 1 expressly separates the valve body and valve from the gladhand. Claim 1 also requires that the gladhand is moveably mounted to the valve body in which the valve is contained. The combination of the valve body being separated from the gladhand and the gladhand being moveably mounted to the valve body, is not taught by the combination, which teaches the valve integrated with the gladhand and the valve moving with the gladhand.

This difference in structure is quite important. The structure of the combination will mean that the handle for actuating the valve will move as the gladhand moves. This is not desirable in the environment of a tractor/trailer in which the gladhand is surrounded by numerous hoses and the like that could catch the lever as the gladhand moves and possibly move the lever resulting in an unwanted change in the condition of the air flow, which could shut off air flow to the trailer or open the air flow to an unconnected gladhand thereby draining the tractor air system.

The structure of claim 1 locates the valve such that it will not move with the gladhand and it will not have the same risks of accidental change in the state of the valve attributable to the gladhand movement. Thus, claim 1 is novel and non-obvious in view of the combination.

Claims 2-16 all depend directly or indirectly on claim 1 and are patentable over the alleged combination for the same reasons as claim 1.

New claim 37 calls for the valve to be located within the body and a moveable connection that moveably couples the gladhand to the body. In this aspect, claim 37, like claim 1, also defines a structure that is not reached by the combination. Therefore claims 37-52 are patentable over the alleged combination.

REJECTION UNDER 35 USC 103(A)

Claims 17-19 and 34-36 stand rejected as being obvious over the combination of Chimera, Berg, and Kushida (U.S. Patent No. 4,483,511). The rejection is traversed.

As claims 34-36 are canceled from the application, this rejection will be addressed with respect to claims 17-19.

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Kushida is cited for disclosing a ball valve with a spring biased seal. Kushida's disclosure is limited to a valve. As such, Kushida cannot remedy the shortcomings of the combination of Chimera and Berg as described above in the prior rejection. As claims 17-19 depend directly or indirectly from claim 1, the prior arguments for claim 1 with respect to the combination of Chimera and Berg applies to the current rejection. Therefore, claims 17-19 are patentable over the combination of Chimera, Berg, and Kushida.

It is respectfully submitted that all of the claims in the application are allowable for the reasons stated above. Early notification of allowability is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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